



## **PRESS RELEASE – ATCA CONFERENCE**

The realisation that the devastating impact of alcohol and drugs has no boundaries will be the message at a national conference in Fremantle.

A panel of high profile fathers will be speaking on the impact of their sons' drug use on their lives at the Australasian Therapeutic Communities Association (ATCA) international conference from 1 to 3 June 2011 at the Fremantle Esplanade Hotel.

Bryan Cousins, Police Commissioner Karl O'Callaghan and Tony Trimmingham from the Sydney organisation Family Drug Support have personally experienced the consequences of the often devastating effects that alcohol and other drug use can have on a family system.

Drugs – licit and illicit, prescribed and non prescribed can all have an impact on the lives of those who use them and the people who love those who use.

'No closed Doors' is the theme of the conference hosted by ATCA, a national organisation representing 67 therapeutic communities in Australia and New Zealand. Lynne Magor-Blatch, Executive Officer of ATCA said "the recent debate in Perth about alcohol/drug fuelled violent behaviour reminds us all that drug use has many faces and can have devastating consequences for so many families." She went on to say that the high profile fathers will each bring a personal dimension to the tragedies that lie behind the public debate.

Ms Magor-Blatch said that the dads are among an impressive line of national and international speakers including US psychiatrists Ken Minkoff and Christine Cline who are recognized as among the leading US experts on integrated treatment of individuals with co-occurring psychiatric and substance disorders.

Therapeutic communities provide a holistic approach to treatment and rehabilitation, addressing the underlying causes of alcohol and drug use. Perth therapeutic communities such as Cyrenian House, Palmerston Farm and Serenity Lodge have been operating for many years supporting hundreds of people each year.

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